

April 27, 2020

Secretary of State Gardner Announces Select Committee on 2020 Emergency Election Support

Given the unprecedented challenges to voting posed by the coronavirus pandemic, and the concerns about the security and conduct of the September and November elections, we are taking steps to ensure that every person who chooses to vote, or work at the polls, will be able to do so despite whatever obstacles might exist at the time. We will be prepared in the event of a worst case scenario.

Today I am announcing the formation of a six member select committee to be chaired by the chairman of the state Ballot Law Commission. This committee will advise the Department of State on the use of \$3.2 million in federal CARES Act money. Those funds were received last week and are in the state treasury, and they are dedicated for dealing with the pandemic during the 2020 elections.

These funds will help cover additional costs incurred at the local level for handling and processing absentee ballots over and above the number of those cast four years ago and protecting the health and safety of voters and poll workers.

All six members of this committee have been actively involved in state and local affairs. They share years of personal election experience and each brings a unique perspective. The committee is tasked with recommending the best use and responsible allocation of these funds.

The members are:

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| Bradford E. Cook | Chairman, Ballot Law Commission. He has served multiple terms on the commission beginning in the 1980s. He was first appointed by the governor and executive council and over the years by Republican and Democratic speakers of the house. |
| Barbara J. Griffin | State representative from Goffstown, current member and former chair of House Election Law Committee. |
| Katherine M. Hanna | Former legal counsel to Governor John Lynch, involved in many election legal matters and former state representative from Keene. |
| Kathy L. Seaver | Farmington Town Clerk for 41 years, past President, New Hampshire City and Town Clerks Association 2008-2009. |
| Tom Sherman, MD | State senator from seacoast – District 24, resident of Rye. He is vice chair of the senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee, and a former two-term member of the New Hampshire House. |
| Eugene Van Loan III | Alternate member, state Ballot Law Commission. He is former moderator of the town of Bedford, and served as legal counsel to Congressman Louis C. Wyman during the closest U.S. senate election in American history (two votes) 1974-1975. |